



# CHANNELS, CHELMSFORD PUBLIC ART PROJECT ARTIST BRIEF

20th July 2021

# 01 INTRODUCTION

Chelmsford City Council have secured funding to enable the design and integration of public art into the Channels Development in Chelmsford, with the aim of enhancing the character and identity of the development – making this a unique and inspiring place of which the local community can be proud.

This brief provides a summary of the site context and team structure for the project, along with the scope of the artist's input required to develop proposals (based on comprehensive public and stakeholder consultation), followed by the artist's technical design and detailing, fabrication and installation of public art into the development.

The brief concludes with a summary of the selection process and information required in response to this request for Expressions of Interest in the project.

It must be noted that no proposals are requested for this stage, the Expressions of Interest should focus on the list of deliverables outlined at the end of this brief, as the appointed artist will need to ensure their concept and developed proposals reflect the input from community and stakeholder consultations.



Channels, Chelmsford

# 02 AIMS OF THE PUBLIC ART PROJECT

**“Public art is any original and unique work by an artist in a public place. It should relate to the context of a particular location and can help to define a public space.”**

(Chelmsford City Council)

The aims of the Public Art for the Channels Development are to:

- actively engage the community to ensure their input influences the approach and form of public art delivered in this development
- deliver artwork that provides public enjoyment and to boost the communities sense of pride in their area
- reflect local cultural identity, contributing to the cultural enrichment of North-East Chelmsford
- encourage the local community to use the new spaces throughout the development
- respect the architectural context and landscape setting
- lead to interpretative and educational activity and an improved public understanding of the context in which they live



# 03 BACKGROUND

## SITE CONTEXT

The site is located in North-East Chelmsford on the site of the former Channels Golf Club and is currently under development to provide up to 750 homes, a community hub, a mix of commercial and business uses, a local country park, village green, extensive areas of green corridors and associated open spaces.

The site is in an area previously used for quarrying gravels and stone, with parts of the area then subject to landfill before remediation / landscape restoration and subsequent development of the former Channels Golf Club.

The development has been split into six phases, with earlier southern phases now complete and the northern phases currently under construction.



# 03 BACKGROUND

Further information can be found on the following websites:

[www.geoessex.org.uk](http://www.geoessex.org.uk)

[www.erms.org](http://www.erms.org)

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

The landscape, culture and wildlife of the site and its surrounding area have been heavily influenced by the prehistoric natural forces of the Ice Age, resulting in the availability of extensive geological deposits, and subsequent stone and gravel extraction that has shaped local industry and the landscape setting.

GeoEssex and the Essex Rock and Mineral Society have provided the following brief summary of the geological history of the site.

**The Ancestral Thames** - The River Thames once flowed across mid Essex. During large-scale melting, at the beginning and end of each cold period of the Ice Age from at least 1 million to nearly half a million years ago, the river was a huge unbounded braided torrent that carried vast amounts of gravel across the land - even large boulders in times of flood. Each time the river flow waned, much material could no longer be carried, so it was left in the bed of the river. These gravel and boulder deposits were dug from the Channels site and used as aggregate for building. Once these deposits were exhausted, the pits were used for landfill and fishing lakes and the ground around landscaped and used as a golf course.

**Boulders at Channels** - Large boulders have long been used as landmarks and landscape features such as standing stones and stone circles. Some such boulders have already been used as features in front of the Channels complex and there are others distributed around the site. Some boulders are made of the distinctive Hertfordshire

puddingstone and others are of sarsen. There is also one boulder that has a different composition from much farther afield, probably Scotland, which was brought to the area in the ice sheet which diverted the Thames away from this area.

Hertfordshire Puddingstone - this was formed about 56 million years ago when the climate of Britain became a very hot desert - like the centre of Australia today. A layer of what had been beach pebbles and sand became cemented with quartz beneath the surface of the ground.

Sarsen - This is puddingstone without the pebbles. The outer ring of stones at Stonehenge is made from very large sarsen stones. Those on the Channels site show distinctive rootlet holes and mamillated surfaces that point to their formation within a soil layer.



# 03 BACKGROUND

Further information can be found on the following websites:

[www.geoessex.org.uk](http://www.geoessex.org.uk)

[www.erms.org](http://www.erms.org)

**Glacial Till** - About 450,000 years ago, during the coldest part of the Ice Age, Essex was situated at the southern edge of the Anglian Ice Sheet. The ice sheet was up to 2 kilometres (over a mile) thick in places, and covered most of Britain. Its extent is fairly well known because it has left behind evidence of its existence in the form of a rock called boulder clay, or till (often referred to as Anglian till). The ice sheet extended as far south as Chigwell and Hornchurch, with deposits of boulder clay north of this line – aside from locations where it has been removed by erosion.

A cliff of glacial till lies along the southern part of the Phase 6 area of the Channels development, presenting an interesting preserved edge of part of the former Broomfield Quarry. The quarry originally worked the underlying Kesgrave (Thames) sands and gravels which involved removal of the overburden of till prior to gravel extraction. It is rare for such a cliff of till to have survived. It is one of the only places where you can see direct evidence for the former existence of glaciers in Essex and the only such site that is visible to the public.

**Ice Age Animals** - Fossils of many ice age animals such as woolly mammoth and rhino have been found in Essex. Many spectacular specimens were found in the 19th Century by workman in brick pits and gravel quarries. There are some mammal and other fossils found locally on display in Chelmsford Museum.

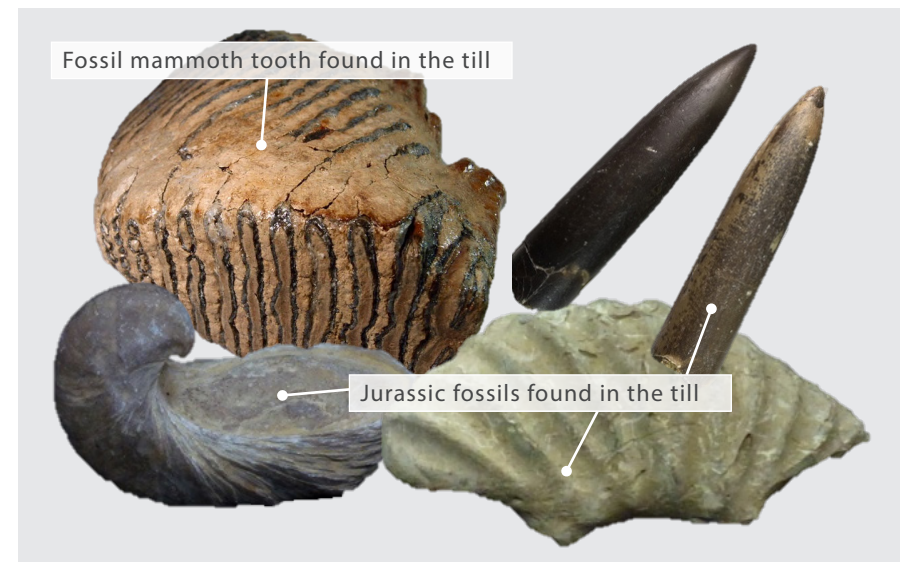


Till cliff of chalky boulder clay deposited by the Anglian ice sheet



# 03 BACKGROUND

Further information can be found on the following websites:  
[www.geoessex.org.uk](http://www.geoessex.org.uk)  
[www.erms.org](http://www.erms.org)



# 04 TECHNICAL & PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS

## PHYSICAL CONSTRAINTS

As noted in Site Context above, areas of the site were formerly subject to quarrying and landfill, with areas of capping to landfill and lakes created in some of the former quarry. The appointed Artist shall review relevant information provided by the project team to ensure they design with these constraints in mind.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

As illustrated on the Phasing Plan, the public areas with potential for installation of public art have an extensive network of footpaths running through them, most of which will be complete (allowing public full access) by the time the artwork is to be installed. The appointed Artist is responsible for liaising with the relevant landowner, developer and contractors to arrange suitable access into the area/s proposed for artwork, to secure the areas and ensure the safety of the general public during installation.

## MAINTENANCE

Once installed, the Public Art must be robust and durable, requiring minimum maintenance and withstanding the potential for vandalism. The finish of artwork must allow for easy removal of graffiti where necessary.

Artwork should be positioned to minimise any negative influence of environmental or climatic conditions, for example avoiding shading or damp areas to prevent moss or algae growth. Artwork should also be designed to avoid any negative impacts from weathering, for example avoiding profile or form that results in pockets of standing water on artwork.

The appointed artist must provide an estimate of annual maintenance costs and expected lifespan of artwork for Chelmsford City Council consideration before approval of artwork during each stage of the design process.



# 05 PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Active public and stakeholder engagement is a key objective and client requirement for developing the public art strategy and proposals for this project. This will ensure that the art proposals:

- truly reflect the identity of the area and contribute to its sense of place
- respond to findings and input from the local community, drawing out their memories, stories, expectations and images of the site - past and present - to create artworks with a lasting legacy
- ensure the community take ownership, pride and care in the artwork and associated public open spaces

The appointed artist will be responsible for the development of a comprehensive Consultation Strategy, to be agreed with Chelmsford City Council and BMD, which is to be carried out before the development of a concept and proposals for the public art project. The artist will be responsible for organising and undertaking stakeholder and community consultations, to include organising and conducting meetings with the community in developing proposals.

The following are to be engaged as part of the consultation process:

- Parish Councils local to the site including Little Waltham, Broomfield and Springfield
- Local schools, clubs and groups
- City Council councillors for Broomfield and The Walthams
- Residents of the Channels development (through the Channels and Croudace Residents Groups)
- Members of the Art Steering Group

It is envisaged that the artist's Consultation Strategy will include a 'hands-on' Workshop with the local community, BMD will be available to assist the appointed artist at the workshop if required.

# 05 PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION



# 06 POTENTIAL ART STRATEGY

The strategy for the integration of public art must be Informed by the consultation process, albeit guided by the appointed artist to develop ideas and options for artistic intervention on the site, responding to a suitable theme to tell the 'story' of the site's history and its influence on the local landscape, wildlife and culture.

Potential options for the strategy include:

- a series of 'interventions', identifying or using key features of the site to tell the 'story'
- an art 'trail', leading users along a specific route through/around the site
- feature artworks installed in specific locations on entry into the development, on key pedestrian junctions or on natural vantage points
- other options can be suggested by the artist and community/stakeholders for consideration

There is potential to include interpretation information for the artwork and history of the site as part of each installation. This may take the form of a poetic narrative etched/integrated into the artwork or other forms of artistic representation, with QR (Quick Response) Codes or other forms of link to allow access to further information on a website.

Suitable media for the Public Art on this project may comprise one or more of the following:

- sculpting, working or arranging existing geological features on site (boulders, rocks, pebbles, gravel etc – making a feature of the existing glacial till cliff)
- land art/earthwork/working with geology
- glass, steel, metalwork, lighting, timber or other media – used to contrast with, showcase, compliment, mount or encase existing geological features of the site
- sculptures or installations in timber, bronze, steel, glass or other media to represent the connection between the Ice Age history and the landscape, culture and wildlife of the present
- kinetic art, making use of smart technology to enable interaction
- development of a legacy that could lead to or facilitate an event or mini festival with performance/music – with local people



# 07 THEME FOR ARTWORK

An earlier development lies to the south of the Channels site, Beaulieu. This development has extensive artwork integrated into the associated open spaces, based on a theme of King Henry VIII. The Art Steering Group has agreed there needs to be a unique identity for Channels of which the artwork can help to achieve, to help make the place distinctive from the neighbouring Beaulieu.

Given the prevalence of geological history evident on the Channels site, the Art Steering Group has taken the decision to base the artwork for the Channels development using this as its theme. The Channels Public Artwork should reflect and provide a narrative based on the influence of the Ice Age, its result on geological resources and subsequent activities in shaping the landscape, wildlife and culture of Chelmsford.

Further research should be carried out by the appointed artist, assisted by consultations with GeoEssex and the Essex Rock and Mineral Society, to ensure that the artist has a good understanding of this historic context – and its influences on present day – before stakeholder and community engagement is undertaken (to ensure ideas generated in consultations, discussions and workshops are informed and led by the theme chosen for this site).

Once consultations have been undertaken, the artist will then develop the art strategy and concept, based on the information and inspiration

# 08 TEAM STRUCTURE

The project team comprise the following:

## **Client: Chelmsford City Council**

Responsible for approving the scope of the project, approval of Artist's Consultation Strategy, approval of Artist's outline and subsequent technical design, sign off on completion of art installation. Appointment of the Artist may be with Chelmsford City Council or directly with the relevant landowner on the respective part of the development (to be confirmed, following discussions with the Artist selected for appointment).

## **Project Coordinator/Project Lead: BMD**

Responsible for establishing the Art Steering Group, leading and managing the Public Art Project, advising on the selection of the Artist and procurement of the public art work / pieces, supporting the selected Artist (particularly regarding the interface between the artwork and the landscape), liaison and coordination with the land owner(s) / private management company(s) or any other relevant stakeholders and coordinating with the Artist in installation of the artwork.

## **Art Steering Group**

Responsible for assisting with the selection of the Artist and approval of the concept and developed design for Public Art, with guidance from BMD. The Art Steering Group is comprised of the following:

- Chelmsford City Council
- Cliffords Group
- Ptarmigan Land
- Channels Residents Association
- Croudace Residents Group
- Marden Homes
- Home Group
- GeoEssex

## **Lead Artist**

Artist acting as contractor fabricator, or as Artist who appoints separate contractor/fabricator.

Responsible for:

- formulating Consultation Strategy for approval with CCC/BMD and conducting stakeholder engagement
- attending and conducting meetings with the community in developing concept proposals
- developing concept, technical and construction design and fabrication/production of the art, along with any supporting structure (e.g. plinths, foundations or fixings as required)
- identifying initial budget and subsequent detailed costings for approval
- identifying and securing further funding (if part of the proposal)
- negotiating and securing any statutory consents (e.g. planning)
- carrying out duties of Principal Designer, Designer and Contractor under Construction Design & Management (CDM) Regulations
- creating and installing approved artwork on site

# 09 BUDGET & PROGRAMME

## BUDGET

The budget for the Public Art project is £75,000, to include all Artist activities including:

- design and other fees, stakeholder engagement, expenses, project management, statutory approvals
- delivery of artwork including fabrication, installation, testing and certification (e.g. RoSPA inspections and reporting on design and post installation)

Activities of BMD, Chelmsford City Council and the Art Steering Group do not form part of the above budget.

## ADDITIONAL FUNDING

There may be potential for additional external funding for the project, via a range of existing sources. During the development of the proposals, the appointed artist will need to identify the potential for additional funding and will need to make applications for such where applicable, with the approval, input and advice of Chelmsford City Council and BMD.

## PROGRAMME

The adjacent provides an indicative programme intended to conclude with completion of artwork installation to the site by the end of May 2022.

This is subject to change, depending on:

- the nature of artwork to be installed
- the potential for further funding and application requirements (if applicable)
- the impact of COVID-19 on the current programme

Artists are to consider this programme in preparing their expressions of interest in response to this brief and should raise any concerns, comments or observations as part of their response.



## 09 BUDGET & PROGRAMME

## ARTIST SELECTION

- Artists to submit Expressions of Interest 13.08.21
- ASG select shortlisted Artists w/c 16.08.21
- Site visit with shortlisted Artists w/c 06.09.21
- Shortlisted Artists prepare for Interview with ASG
- Artist Interviews w/c 20.09.21

## COMMISSIONING & ARTWORK DEVELOPMENT

- | Activity   | Start Date | End Date |
|--|------------|----------|
| Artist Appointed   | 27.09.21   |          |
| BMD / CCC Kick Start Meeting with Artist                   | 27.09.21   |          |
| Artist Develop Stakeholder / Community Engagement Strategy |            |          |
| Stakeholder / Community Engagement                         |            |          |
| Workshop 4: 'Consultation Workshop                         |            | 25.10.21 |
| Artist Outline Design: presented to ASG at end of process  |            |          |
| Artist further funding bid (if applicable)                 |            |          |
| Technical Design & Approvals                               |            |          |

## FABRICATION & INSTALLATION

- Artist creation and installation of artworks

# 10 ARTIST APPOINTMENT

## SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for this project is by private invitation. A long list of artists has been invited to provide an Expression of Interest in response to this brief, by submitting the information outlined below. The Art Steering Group will consider this information and will select a short list of artists who will be given the opportunity to visit the site and prepare a presentation for consideration and selection of an Artist to be appointed.

### Information Required for Expression of Interest

Expressions of interest should be submitted by 17:30h on 13th August 2021, this should comprise:

- brief written statement explaining why you are interested in this commission and your proposed approach to this project
- current Curriculum Vitae with visual material (maximum 10 images) of previous relevant completed art projects, including those in the public realm, and a brief summary (maximum 500 words) describing how your approach / style can be applied to contribute to this site in 'telling the story' of the historic context in an artistic and interactive way
- brief summary of experience in public and stakeholder consultation and how this has been used to inform the development of similar forms of artwork
- confirmation of Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurances held (project will require cover of each at £5 million for each and every claim)
- confirmation of recent Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (was previously CRB) and that you are not barred from working with vulnerable groups

### Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest should be submitted electronically by email (with all attachments totalling a maximum of 10MB, issued as PDF files, formatted for A4 printing).

Expressions of interest should be sent to:

**Richard Waddell**

**Bradley Murphy Design Ltd**

Email: [richard.waddell@bradleymurphydesign.co.uk](mailto:richard.waddell@bradleymurphydesign.co.uk)

Tel: 01926 676 489

### Artist Interviews – Shortlisted Artists

Shortlisted artists will be invited to undertake a site visit (if required) and to attend a brief interview with the Art Steering Group. The interview will comprise the following:

- brief presentation (max 20 minutes), covering:
- re-cap of your previous relevant experience and why you are interested in this commission
- your understanding of the local area and context of the site (particularly the influence of the site's Ice Age history on the character of the landscape, local culture and wildlife)
- re-cap on your proposed approach to this project (following further research on the local area and historic context) and how your approach / style can be applied to contribute to this site in 'telling the story' of the historic context in an artistic and interactive way
- suggested programme to completion (with consideration of initial programme outlined above)
- questions & answers (max 40 minutes): allowing Artist to respond to queries from the Art Steering Group

